

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-03 EB-11 AID-20

HEW-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4491

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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TAGS: PFOR SREF UNRWA XF NL

SUBJECT: DUTCH PROPOSAL TO RESTRUCTURE UNRWA

REF: THE HAGUE 4290

1. FOR RECORD, WE WISH POINT OUT THAT FOUR AREAS OF DUTCH CONCERN RE UNRWA'S OPERATIONS CITED PARA 2 REFTEL--ALL OF WHICH PERTAIN TO CONTROL OVER AND SECURITY IN REFUGEE CAMPS--HAVE LITTLE OR NOTHING TO DO WITH "RESTRUCTURING" UNRWA. AS UNRWA COMGEN HAS EMPHASIZED REPEATEDLY IN PAST, UNRWA CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT GOES ON IN THOSE CAMPS AND HAS NO MEANS OF POLICING THEM. UNRWA COMGEN HAS CALLED ATTENTION TO THIS DEPLORABLE SITUATION TIME AND AGAIN IN HIS ANNUAL REPORTS AND UNGA APPEARANCES OVER PAST SEVERAL YEARS. SUBJECT HAS ALSO BEEN COVERED FULLY EVERY YEAR IN SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE AND HAS COME UP OFTEN IN UN WORKING GROUP IN UNRWA FINANCES. THERE-
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FORE, IT RATHER SURPRISING THAT DUTCH THINKING REPORTED

REFTEL APPEARS IGNORE THIS VITAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNRWA AND THOSE OF HOST GOVTS. UNRWA PROVIDES SERVICES TO REFUGEES BUT HAS NEITHER LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR NOR MEANS OF CONTROLLING WHAT GOES ON IN SO-CALLED CAMPS.

2. CONCERNS NOTED BY DUTCH ARE MOST SERIOUS IN LEBANON, LESS SO IN SYRIA AND VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT IN JORDAN AND OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WHERE GOJ AND GOI HAVE WILL AND CAPABILITY TO ENFORCE CONTROL OVER WHAT GOES ON IN CAMPS, OUTSIDE OF UNRWA-CONTROLLED FACILITIES. UNRWA COMGEN HAS REPEATEDLY CALLED ATTENTION OF LEBANESE AND SYRIAN GOVTS TO PROBLEMS OF NATURE CITED BY DUTCH, NOTING THEIR ADVERSE EFFECTS ON UNRWA OPERATIONS AND IMAGE. SARG HAS BEEN GENERALLY UNRESPONSIVE. GOL WOULD LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN TO BE ABLE IMPOSE ITS CONTROL OVER WHAT GOES ON ON CAMPS. HOWEVER, AS EVENTS OF LAST MAY REVEALED, IT DOES NOT HAVE CAPABILITY OF DOING SO AT PRESENT TIME.

3. WOULD ALSO NOTE THAT USG IS NO LESS CONCERNED THAN GON OVER SITUATION DESCRIBED ABOVE, AND THAT EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN CONTINUAL TOUCH WITH UNRWA AND GOL OFFICIALS RE NEED TO CORRECT IT. (SHOULD BE NOTED THAT GOL DID SUCCEED LAST JULY IN PERSUADING FEDAYEEN TO RETURN CERTAIN UNRWA-OWNED CAMP STRUCTURES TO AGENCY CONTROL.) AT SAME TIME, USG HAS ACCEPTED COMGEN'S ASSURANCES THAT UNRWA IS TAKING ALL POSSIBLE MEASURES TO ASSURE THAT NO PART OF US CONTRIBUTION SHALL BE USED FOR PURPOSES OTHER THAN HUMANITARIAN RELIEF CONSISTENT WITH UNRWA'S MANDATE.
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